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MORE BRIGHT
THE DAYS

A Collection of Poems
by GEORGE BATHO

St. John's

PS Batho, G.

8503

.A84 More bright the days

M6



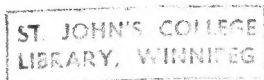
St. John's

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*A*s a loving tribute to the memory of a good husband and a kind father, the widow and sons of George Batho present this booklet.

All of his poems were written for the pure joy of writing them. And while it was never his thought that any were of outstanding merit, we have found many of those which follow to be inspiring and all entertaining. They show his great love for nature and indicate in many places the philosophy by which he lived.

Margaret Adeline Batho
Elgin R. Batho
Bruce Batho

December 1948

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by
ELGIN and BRUCE BATHO

When I Am Gone

'Twill matter not, when I am dead and gone,
How many folk have ever heard my name,
Nor what the measure of my petty fame.

I shall not know if wreathes are laid upon
My sombre casket. Still I like to feel
That one to whom I gave a needed meal
Will grieve that he has really lost a friend,
When comes my end.

When I depart, what difference will it make
How much of wealth I did possess while here?
I can take nothing to that other sphere.

But if I may have soothed away an ache
From some care-burdened life, and spoken praise,
And lifted clouds, and made *more bright the days*,
Then I shall, really, not have trudged in vain
Through heat and rain.



THE GREAT OUTDOORS

The Park

Near where I live is situate
A wide and stately park;
And it has corners gay with bloom,
And corners grim and dark.

I love to go on summer days,
When stirs the lazy breeze,
And sit in some dark corner there,
And visit with the trees.

Some trees are young and regular
And straight as straight can be;
A gard'ner, I am very sure,
Is proud of such a tree.

But over yonder is an elm,
With trunk rough, gnarled and stout;
And for one hundred feet each way
Its branches wander out.

This tree is crotched and branched and bent;
One cannot count its limbs;
And in its top a dozen birds
All sing their tribal hymns.

Beneath its spread no sapling grows;
Its shade is dense and dark;
This elm, as far as it can spread,
Completely fills the park.

I love that park of straight young trees,
Of flowers gay and bright;
I love the spreading, gloomy elm,
Where linger shades of night.

And each tree has its special charm;
The picture would be marred
If from that most delightful park
One feature were debarred.

I often dream as I sit there,
Among the elms and oaks;
And think how like to men are trees,—
How like to trees are folks.

Some folk are proper, straight and prim,
And beautiful withal;
They look best set, like trees, in clumps—
Smart, regular and tall.

Set by themselves, they lack in size,
Their branches fail in length;
They ne'er impress one with the thought
Of innate rugged strength.

Then there are folk, big, rugged, gnarled,
Who look like that old elm;
Their outreach is so very wide
They dominate a realm.

But as I sit among the trees
I enter this remark,
That clearly God can use them all
To make a wondrous park.

Grass

I sing of grass! 'Twill ne'er protest
Its own importance. Lying low
Upon the earth's maternal breast,
It is, of all the herbs that grow,
Man's surest friend. Its prevalence
Is pledge of God's beneficence.

I sing of grass! With lavish hands
Its leafy wealth it freely yields;
And hungry flocks and herds and bands
Wax fat and lazy in its fields;
And tribute, too, to man is paid
By every stem and every blade.

I sing of grass! No flag it flies
Of vivid hue; but its soft green
Does with all nature harmonize,
And nowhere else is beauty seen
So well as where the flowers mass
Their blaze beyond a bed of grass.

I sing of grass! With silent hand
It spreads its beauty everywhere.
When industry has marred the land
And left stark stretches, plowed and bare,
Forgiveness comes with tiptoe tread
As nature weaves her grassy spread.

I sing of grass! When warring men
Rut deep the earth with screaming shell,
And ugliness grins ghastly—then
Grass softens all the scars of hell;
And earth, with face restored by sod,
Again upturns its smile to God.

I sing of grass! Men, proud of strength,
With ruthless footsteps o'er it tread;
But when their stricken forms at length
Are softly laid among the dead
Then creeping grass, with gen'rous grace,
Adorns their quiet resting place.

Autumn Woods

The Master Artist tinted hills,
And flowers, sunsets, seas and rills;
Then said, one autumn, "Now I must
A forest splash with green and rust
And crimson, gold and rainbow dust."

The sumacs flamed in blazing red;
With sombre green the pines were spread;
The poplars all donned yellow cloaks;
In brown were dipped the sturdy oaks;
The birches stood as golden strokes.

And then, to give the great surprise,
The maple trees were dipped in dyes
That had been brewed from artists' dreams
Of crimson flames and rainbow creams,
Splashed from a whisk of gay sunbeams.

And, when were painted countless miles,
Most people wore responsive smiles,
While, others in mute wonder stood;
The Artist said, "'Tis very good!"
But some folk never saw the wood.

The Pictures in the Clouds

In summertime I dearly love
To lie upon the grass,
And dreamily to gaze above,
And watch the grey clouds pass.

I oft' see figures in a cloud,
And forms of strange design;
Here is an old man, bent and bowed;
There is a tree or vine;

A witch, an elephant, a clown,
A turtle or a bear;
A king, with sceptre and with crown;
Or castles in the air.

I love to watch while God displays
His pictures overhead;
Sometimes they form in filmy greys,
Sometimes in gold or red.

You say these sights you ne'er have found;
Now, really, do you try?
Perhaps your thoughts are on the ground,
And never on the sky.

A Song of the Forests

I sing of the forests that blanket the hillsides;
That venture with hesitant tread in the bogland;
Or outline the lakelet; or shadow the river.

Their value transcends all man's base computations:
Their bounty, their beauty, their freshness, their coolness;
The home they provide for the wild things of nature.

The forest, indeed, is God's great lab'ratory:
In silence is wrought such stupendous achievements
As in wonder eclipse all the deeds of man's workshops.

It takes for its use only things elemental:
The soil and the shower, the wind and the sunshine;
It absorbs the tense heat of the furnace of heaven.

From slime and from vapor the tree gathers substance;
The leaves freight the rain clouds with moisture unmeasured;
The roots grasp the boulders with fingers like iron.

The uses by man of the bounty of forests
Can never be counted; their number is legion;
They are as diverse as the plants of the prairie.

Let us nurture the forests with zeal unabating;
Protect them with care from the ravishing wastage
That spreads when the fire fiend severs its leashes.

Who planteth a tree is a wise benefactor;
Generations to come will be helped by his prudence,
And children whom he will not know shall yet bless him.

And when, at the end of the journey, we slumber,
May we rest where the trees catch the glow of the sunset
And chant to their Maker arboreal vespers.

Dandelion

Charming, cheery, little flower,
Springing up in half an hour,
Be it sunshine, be it shower—
Dandelion.

Daring, pesky, saucy weed,
Bearing shaggy wigs of seed,
That float off as soon as freed—
Dandelion.

Some folk love your jaunty smile
All about their domicile;
Glad to hail you mile on mile,
Dandelion.

Others hate you wors'n sin—
Makes 'em rile all up within,
To destroy you they begin,
Dandelion.

Little flower, little weed,
Loved for beauty, cursed for deed,
Kinsman of our human breed,
Dandelion.

Every thinker will agree
Men are very much like thee;
Good and bad combine in me,
Dandelion.

A Showery Morn

The rain was like a falling fog
When I awoke at dawn;
The lilac forms were weighted low,
And sodden was the lawn.

I could not go to work, so I
Stared out across the street,
And watched the rain drops cling to wires
With strangely upturned feet.

But as I gazed, I thought they turned
To robins on a green,
That cock their heads and listen hard
To what may not be seen.

A rain drop sped along the wire—
A quick, decisive pass—
Just as a robin when he hears
A worm below the grass.

But as I dreamed of rows of birds,
The fog was blown away;
The wires were bare, the sun shone out,
And I went on my way.

THE SEASONS

I Thank My God

I thank my God for all the blessings of the year now gone—
For rosy morns; for starlit skies at night;
For storm clouds, and for days of mellow light;
For falling showers;
For laughing flowers;
For unmatched greenness of the rain-soaked sod—
I thank my God!

I thank my God for all the labors of the year now gone—
For pleasant tasks; for sweat and toil and grime;
For cool and quiet calm at eventime;
For paths of mire;
For loads that tire;
For tasks obscure when no one may applaud—
I thank my God!

I thank my God for all my comrades of the year now gone—
For little children, laughing by the way;
For cheerful toilers, working night and day;
For smiles through tears;
For tone that cheers;
For hearts that know the stroke of sorrow's rod—
I thank my God!

I thank my God for all the valor of the year now gone—
For those who 'twixt me and the foe may stand;
For those who fly, or sail, or march on land;
Who bear the strife;
Who offer life;
For those in camps, and those beneath the sod—
I thank my God!

I thank my God for all the tonic of the year now gone—
For church, and psalm, and hymn and prayer, and praise;
For God's own Spirit, leading through the days;
For gifts to bring;
For songs to sing;
For trust that Someone notes each smile and nod—
I thank my God!

I thank my God for all the fullness of the year now gone—
I thank Him also for the year to be;
(He knows not time, as known by you and me)
We may not know
The way we go;
But for my faith to walk the path untrod—
I thank my God!

(Written for a Watch Night Service, December 31, 1944.)

The New Year

The Old Year now is sped—
Its moments flitted past;
Its kindly days of grace are fled;
'Tis numbered now among the dead;
Its requiem has now been said;
For ne'er returns the past.

But comes another year—
A further span of grace;
Anew the words of hope we hear,
Fresh opportunities appear,
Help us to live, Lord, in Thy fear,
And daily seek Thy face.

That's Spring!

At morn the sun its splendor shows,
And smiles so bright o'er everything;
By ten a trickling streamlet flows
From sinking piles of winter snows;
And passing autos souse our clothes,
And spatter coat and hat and hose.
That's spring!

The ardent planter dreams he sows
And rakes and does his gardening;
In fancy light he scents the rose
And mignonette; the grass he mows;
He sees his tulips, rows on rows;
The summer sunshine hotter grows.
The dreamer starts—the North Wind blows;
He shields his ears and warms his nose;
And now it snows and snows and snows.
That's spring!

The Signs of Spring

What are the signs of spring?
The boys o'er marbles bent,
Where old King Sol smiles bright and long
Upon the bare cement? .
The south breeze piping full and strong,
With rain accomp'niment?
We are not sure that winter's gone
Till robins flit upon the lawn.

What are the signs of spring?
The sales of Easter hats?
The fact that men have laid aside
Their winter coats and spats?
Or that the youth is searching out
His last year's balls and bats?
These signs seem inconclusive till
We hear the robin's cheery trill.

What are the signs of spring?
The passing of the snow?
The farmer getting out his drill,
His early wheat to sow?
The frost-bound creek relenting till
Its waters start to flow?
"Spring now is here!" we venture when
The sprightly robin comes again.

O herald of the spring!
O messenger of cheer!
We welcome thee more heartily
With every passing year.
Thy call, so prompt and strong and clear,
Dispels all doubt that spring is here.

September

These are the golden days;
Soft falls the light;
Air filled with smoky haze;
Curtain'd the sight;
All lights and shades subdued—
Earth seems in pensive mood.

Near woods are green and gold,
With tints of wine;
But on yon upland bold
The murky pine
Disdains all colors bright,
Dark clad in shroud of night.

Purple, the asters smile—
Sprightly, erect;
Roadsides are, mile on mile,
Gaily bedecked;
God's gardens, far and nigh,
Delight the traveller's eye.

Music from yonder hill
Heavily floats,
Where the great threshing mill
Hums its deep notes.
Farmers, in fear of rain,
Thresh out the golden grain.

'Mongst the long garden rows,
Apron well lade,
Where corn in plenty grows,
Lingers the maid;
Amidst the trailing green
Are golden pumpkins seen.

Now roam the cows and sheep,
Where oat fields stood,
Gleaning, 'mongst stubbles deep,
Prodigal food.
Full oft' in summer days
They longed these fields to graze.

Through fields of gleaming gold
Ribbons of black
Mark, with fresh upturned mold,
The plowman's track,
While gulls, with wheeling flight,
On the fresh earth alight.

Grouse, hiding in the grass,
Elude the eye;
Then, lest we may not pass,
Bullet-like fly;
Afield, their flight is whirred;
Ne'er was more welcome bird.

Too soon the woods are bare;
The leaves are dead;
September, month so rare,
Too soon is fled.
Glory and gold and haze—
God's wondrous autumn days.

Three Christmas Messages

I feel a thrill when Christmas comes,
For then one hundred old-time chums
And kindly-hearted friends express
Their radiant thoughts. I do confess
My heart to mellowness succumbs,
And that I thrill when Christmas comes.

There is no other time of year
When opulence seems quite so near
As it appears on Christmas Day,
When friends, in such confused array,
Pledge truest friendship. Surest wealth,
I do believe, are friends and health.

* * * * *

It makes not sense for us to say,
"We loved our good friend yesterday;
And so today there is no need
That love be shown in word or deed!"
The flower of love, the sages warn,
Must bloom afresh with every morn.

What matter if the rose we send
Is like the one we gave our friend
One year ago? It still conveys
Our feeling, as in other days.
Each spring is blest by fresh'ning showers,
Because each year man needs new flowers.

A Christmas wish is like the bloom
That for one hour shatters gloom;
Then fades; but stamps on mem'ry clear
An impress that will haunt the year,
And flood with light some cheerless day,
And scatter sunshine on the way.

And so we write afresh this year
Our modest word of Christmas cheer:
May Heaven bless thee every day,
And God's kind presence cheer thy way.
This sacred wish we send to thee
For Christmas, Nineteen Forty-Three.

* * * * *

As Christmas nears, before the fire
I sit betimes and idly dream,
While warmth and memory conspire
To lend to every radiant beam
Some personality. The flames
All take on faces or spell names.

The shifting, subtle firegleams hold
The spirits of a friendly host,
Who come and go, all uncontrolled;
Those linger longest whom I most
Sincerely cherish as my friends;
Such company Dame Fancy sends.

.
The mortal forms of friends I may
Not really meet on Christmas Day;
But still before my fire I hold
Communion with those friends of old
Who through sheer worth have come to be
The very salt of earth to me.

December

I like the brusque December days,
When in the air are flakes of snow;
When from the North the stout wind plays,
And vagrant leaves before it go,
As souls, unsaved, haste to their doom,
Swept by some weird, ethereal broom.

I like the tang of frosty air;
I like to tramp o'er frozen bogs;
Stout-clad, to wander anywhere,
And clamber over stumps and logs;
Observe wild things that I would know,
And study bird tracks in the snow.

I love the tree forms in the wood,
Full-clad in Winter's diamond lace;
Methinks the entire neighborhood
Becomes a shimm'ring fairy place;
One doubts if June's bloomfest, so fair,
Could with this wonderland compare.

From some lookout upon a hill
I gaze across the shrub-pierced snow
And skaters see, as in quadrille,
Upon some sheltered pond below;
Their joyous laughter floats to me;
They are a pleasant company.

No artist ever made a sketch
So pleasing to the critic eye
As Nature's laboratories etch
Against the pallid, steel-blue sky
By stark elm forms upon the hill
That scrambles up beyond the mill.

And when at dusk I lay aside
Great coat, fur cap and woolen glove,
And friends I greet, so true and tried,
December evenings, too, I love;
To meet friends 'round a radiant hearth
Leads all the joys I know on earth.

A Psalm of Christmas

How blest the hearth where Christmas brings its
 meed of hallowed joy;
It is a fjord with waters calm, when outside roars
 the gale;
It is a burst of yellow light when skies are dense
 with cloud;
Tis like the beckoning call of palms across a
 desert land.

Yes! Christmas still reminds the world that God
 did send a King
To reign within the hearts of men and teach them
 how to live;
For happiness and joy come not through guns and
 strife and power,
But only through the rule of One whose sway is
 based on love.

HYMNS

God of Ancient Days

Tune: Dennis

We lift glad hearts to Thee,
Thou God of Ancient Days;
In joyous songs of jubilee
We offer grateful praise.

Our fathers, in their day,
Were led from strength to strength;
We, too, would humbly walk Thy way,
And Zion reach at length.

Though braggart sons of time
To pagan cults may turn,
Unquenched in every land and clime
The fires of God still burn.

Thy covenant yet stands;
Thy word remains the same;
Thy name our worship still commands;
Thy task our powers claim.

Tune: Sandon

Lord, Thou hast been our Captain through the
years,

And our defence;

Without Thee all our fevered efforts end
In impotence.

Thou art a Rock within a weary land;

We dwell secure beneath Thy sheltering hand.

Wilt Thou, dear Lord, be one with us tonight;
Direct our way.

This union bless; vouchsafe Thy presence still
From day to day.

We know, O God, that there can union be
Only as hearts are joined in love to Thee.

Grant us Thy leading; give us grace and love
And holy zeal;

Help us to pray and praise; and may we oft'
Thy presence feel.

Thy truth, O Lord, will ever make us free;

Help us each day Thy blessed truth to see.

Hail The Resurrection Morning

Tune: Cwm Rhondda

Hail the resurrection morning!
Greet, my soul, the risen King!
Jesus o'er the grave has triumphed;
Let the whole creation sing:
 He is risen!
'Tis the resurrection morn!

Where thy sting, O Death? We challenge;
Where thy victory, O Grave?
Christ forever has established
His eternal power to save.
 He is able
From the power of death to free.

Through God's glorious dispensations
Runs one soul-enthraling plan;
More abundant life He offers
Each succeeding day to man.
 Hallelujah!
He shall reign forevermore.

Thou didst conquer, blessed Saviour,
On that first great Easter morn;
Now may Thy Eternal Spirit
In our hearts be daily born.
 We adore Thee,
Thou transcendent risen Lord.

Tune: Cwm Rhondda

Lord, accept our adoration;
Thou hast led us through the years;
Priceless is Thy great salvation,
And Thy presence ever cheers.

Lord Jehovah,
Hear our song of jubilee.

For the task to us committed,
'Neath our own and other skies;
For the glorious lives submitted
To Thy will and enterprise;

Blest Redeemer,
We return our thankful praise.

Should men scoff in proud derision,
And to pagan cults some turn,
Help to see with steady vision
That the fires of God still burn.

Lord Almighty,
Perfect Thou our faith in Thee.

RELIGIOUS AND PHILOSOPHICAL

God So Loved the World

(See *John 3:16*)

God loved the world! He loved us one by one!
Of all the world's dark sinners there was none,
Not even Judas, price of blood in hand,
Excluded from the welcome God had planned.
In every land and age, from pole to pole,
God's love enfolds the farthest human soul.

God loved, and so He gave! He gave His Son—
The only Son God had! And this was done
That whosoever should believe in Him
With one clear ray of faith, though faint and dim,
Should have eternal life. Our thought is lost
As we regard the gift and learn its cost.

We take the gift, astounded at the love
That brought to earth the King of Heaven above.
We cannot pay. God opens no account;
Our debt is cancelled to the full amount;
For God so loved the world and freely gave
His only Son that He the world might save!

The Lord's House

A day in Thy courts is better than
a thousand.—Ps.84:10.

This is the day of rest,
Of quiet, peace and calm,
When God on weary man distils
His recreative balm.

We gather in God's house,
To listen, pray and sing;
With awe and wonder we adore
The great eternal King.

He meets us here; to us
He doth new strength impart;
His glory and His grace inspire
Fresh zeal in every heart.

More plainly here we see
The path where duty leads;
We feel the urge of holy thoughts,
The call to worthy deeds.

Lord, bless to us Thy house;
Help us to love Thy day;
And may we keep Thy holy law,
And humbly walk Thy way.

The Gospel by Radio

The Gospel "on the air!" How oft folk say
These words, nor pause to marvel that our day
The wonder knows, that from the vagrant wind
Should come the call of Heaven to mankind.

What company is ours! Once angels sang,
And from the ether depths God's music rang—
"Good will to men and peace!" The message rare
Came to the shepherd band "upon the air."

God's voice has many tones. 'Twas in His plan
Before creation's dawn to speak to man
In myriad ways. He finds tongues everywhere
That tell us of His wondrous love and care.

God calls to men through rock and bird and flower;
Thru tempest wild; thru gently falling shower;
By stars that flood the midnight heavens vast;
By children's cries; by voices of the past;

By message by some ancient writer penned;
By radiant songs; by word of kindly friend.
Now, as of yore, the ether depths again
In wistful tones declare God's love to men.

Onesiphorus

(See Second Timothy 1:16-18)

My hearty meed of praise I give
To humble Onesiphorus,
Who in Paul's troubled day did live,
And rendered service chivalrous.
"He oft refreshed me," Paul explains;
"Nor shame o'ercame him at my chains."

With few strokes Paul the portrait sketched
Of Onesiphorus, the strong,
And we behold a hand outstretched
To help the great old saint along.
"At Ephesus he was most true,
At Rome he sought and found me too."

This little sketch that Paul has drawn
Hangs in the gallery of my mind,
And oftentimes I gaze upon
Its beauty, and new strength I find
To help some trav'ler bear his load
Along life's rough and weary road.

I Am So Glad

I am so glad that God pulls down His twilight shades each night.
The day has many cares that do oppress,
And heavy tasks and sorrows and distress;
Sleep with its balm,
Brings poise and calm.
That man can never to God's day span add,
I am so glad.

My thanks I give that we are blest with seasons unlike.
A year unmarked by changes would fatigue;
The rhythm of the seasons doth intrigue;
'Neath changeless skies
Adventure dies.
For shift of scene in every year I live,
My thanks I give.

I do rejoice that in the darkest hours the stars are best:
That while o'er earth is spread the shroud of night
The firmament is lit with tapers bright;
That no man dare
Their count declare.
When stars together sing in gladsome voice,
I do rejoice.

My heart is pleased that many things will e'er remain unspoiled;
The glory of the sunset none can steal;
The rainbow's arch no cynic can conceal.
The sun's glad light,
The flowers bright,
The witchery of rocks and lakes and trees
My heart doth please.

I am so glad that truth shall stand and evermore be true.
Eternity is pledged to vindicate
The truth, and wrong and error to frustrate.
Each cruel lie
At last shall die.
That fleeting years truth unto truth shall add,
I am so glad.

His Call

To love all those whom God to us has given;
To honor those who for the right have striven;
To seek for peace; believe in God and Heaven,
And follow in God's way—This is His call.

To bravely smile, though sometimes we may fear;
To cheer the faint; to wipe away a tear;
To make some wand'rer feel that God is near,
And teach him not to stray—This is His call.

To bear with modest joy a worthy name;
To strive to realize our noblest aim;
To live a life devoid of wrong and shame,
And seek God's face each day—This is His call.

The Trouble Borrower

There was a chap named Samuel Moulder
Who fretted over growing older.
He started in when he was seven
And said, "I'll shortly be eleven;
Then I'll not have much time to wait
Until I've reached to man's estate.
I can see twenty sweeping by,
Then thirty, forty, fifty—why
The old folk tell me twenty years
Sometimes just like a day appears."
And so he died at twenty-two
A-fretting what he'd ever do
And how the heck he'd keep alive
When he reached up to ninety-five.

A Psalm of the Wayside

The blessings of God are most varied;
They come both in sunshine and shadow;
And sometimes the shadow is blackness,
With only the starlight of heaven.
Anon the black sky is o'ershadowed,
That even the starlight is lacking.
The pathway is hid and we stumble;
We grope and lose sense of direction.
The daylight returns: our eyes greet it;
Light never before was so welcome.
And thus we appreciate sunshine
Because we've experienced darkness.

Thus blest is the child of misfortune,
Who lies by the wayside unheeded,
Who longs in the daytime for evening,
Whose night is made heavy with moaning;
He exclaims, "How great are Thy mercies,
O Father of Comforts and Goodness!
Thy blessings ne'er seemed half so many
Nor sweet as they seem in their absence!"

One sits with his eyes swathed in wrappings,
That daylight and night are unbroken—
The robins the heralds of daybreak,
The nighthawk declaring the evening.
He misses the trees and the faces,
The rainbow or scowl of the storm cloud.
He calls in his darkness, "O Father,
How precious the great gift of eyesight!"

One's hearing deserts him completely,
And now there's perpetual stillness,
His friend is as mute as the Sphinx is,
And streets are as quiet as graveyards;
There now is no urge of the caller,
Nor warning of swift coming danger.
He calls to the Lord, "Break this stillness!
O God! Any price for my hearing!"

Or mayhap 'tis other affliction,
Or fever or wasting or suffering,
We writhe in deep pain or in moaning,
Or lie limp and helpless as water.
We pray to the Lord for quick healing,
And thank Him because of past goodness.

O God! We do need these reminders
To cause us to number Thy mercies:
We ne'er may forget that without Thee
We all are more helpless than children.

The Old Hat And The New

One day I sauntered down the street
Beneath an ancient hat.
Whenever I a friend would meet
He broadly smiled, as we did greet,
And said, "You're surely looking sweet,"
Or made remark like that.

A thousand friends I met that day,
And each one had a smile,
And all had something nice to say.
Compared with mine, their hats were gay
And smart; mine old and gray,
And badly out of style.

Next day, I said, "Today I'll wear
The best hat 'neath the sun."
My friends all said, "I do declare
You look just like a millionaire;"
And then I saw they were aware
That they were quite outdone.

They were restrained; they did not smile
With pleasure full and free.
I said, "I'll wear my old gray tile
To work for yet a little while;
I see it makes a thousand smile;
My new hat suits but me."

A Travel Psalm

Happy is the trav'ler who findeth a friend
in a far land: it is as the sighting of a
harbor light in a dark night.

The stretches of the road may be wearisome
and long: but they shorten at the prospect
of a welcoming hand.

The rules of the highway are stressful and
exact: 'neath the roof of a joyous host
is relaxation and repose.

The fret and care of travel etch their
story on the brow: but the mirthful laugh-
ter of a friend restores a gleam of joy.

A multitude of faces bewilder and confuse:
the guiles of a hostess shrink the world
to an inglenook.

The stranger may not share the secrets of
our heart: but the friend rejoices for
he understands our life.

The table of a kindly soul is a thrice-
blest board: the body, mind and spirit
are refitted for the way.

A hearty "come again" is a rainbow for
tomorrow's sky: it is the pledge of a
gracious welcome in a land to be.

Yea, truly happy is the one who meets a
friend in a far land: it is as a thirsty
man who finds a spring in a desert place.

Gardens

In walking out one day I found
A tangled wilderness of weeds,
Where thorns and thistles choked the ground,
And poison plants and worthless reeds.

"This is a wild waste place," I said—
A blot upon the land it seemed;
"Weeds from this spot will always spread;
This ne'er," said I, "can be redeemed!"

* * * * *

I walked that road another day,
And found a garden full of grace,
With flower and shrub in bright array;
A winsome and delightful place.

And as I marked with care the spot,
To my extreme surprise I found
It was the erstwhile worthless plot,
Converted to this charming ground.

"A modern miracle," said I;
"A transformation rare indeed!
How well does this exemplify
What can be wrought with tool and seed!"

And then I thought—as so may you—
Here was a parable of life,
For human hearts are gardens, too,
Where often poison weeds are rife

Till God, the Tiller, plants His seed,
When He through grace has stirred the ground;
Then life with joy is filled indeed,
And fragrance, bloom and charm abound.

Little Things

I find life very full of cares,
With "little things" to do;
And often, when the evening comes,
I'm tired through and through.

And when I look back o'er the day
Its duties form a host;
But of the tasks that wearied me
The small ones tired most.

Sometimes a letter I do write;
Sometimes I make a call;
Sometimes I wash my plates and pans;
A chair I overhaul.

I've never built a railroad yet;
I never chat with kings;
But life, I find, is very full
Of scores of "little things".

Somewhere I've read of comfort that
A cup of water brings;
And so I feel one may be blessed
In doing "little things".

A LITTLE OF THIS AND THAT

Still a Day Ahead O' Yu

Say, honey, don't be gloomy;
Don't jes' set down an' fret;
There's still a day ahead o' yu
That hasn't been tetch'd yet.

The sun's a-blinkin' in the east,
An' peekin' now and then;
Ol' Sol's as full o' brightness still
As ever he has been.

An' don't forget, dear honey,
That life is like the days:
The clouds an' rain, they come an' go,
The sun—it always stays.

With storms the skies may blacken,
The heavens in grief may cry,
But in an hour the laffin' sun
Is ridin' in the sky.

Say, honey, don't be gloomy;
Don't jes' set down an' fret;
There's still a day ahead o' yu
That hasn't been tetch'd yet.

A-Basking in the Glory

In mem'ry's halls are pictures that I love to
gaze upon—

A birch tree by a doorstep, where the flowers
kissed the lawn;

Our two dear babies, that we watched grow up
through all the years;

And how my darling wife and I shared pleasures,
toils and fears;

But no such picture so reviewed is etched with
finer pen

Than one of really riper years, an anniversary
when

We old-time lovers lingered on, as slipped the
hours away,

A-basking in the glory of a warm October day.

Through all the passing years we two had trav-
elled side by side;

We saw life's panorama change, with alterations
wide;

We sensed a hill not far ahead where one must
halt and stay;

The other one would travel on a chastened,
lonelier way.

But there is wondrous glory yet, when autumn
leaves are red,

And there are deep sweet joys today, and better
ones ahead;

And so we drank our gladness just as it might
come our way,

A-basking in the glory of that warm October day.

*(Written on his 44th wedding anniversary, October 6, 1947,
in the House of Mercy Hospital, Pittsfield, Mass.)*

Today the Bells Ring

Today the bells are ringing;
Today the birds are singing;
Today the flowers are springing

By the way;

Today the vows are spoken
That never may be broken;
A ring is given as token—

Yes, TODAY.

Though life may bring elation,
Or gladness, or vexation—
Bring plenty, or privation,

By the way—

May often in reflection
Return in retrospection
The blissful recollection

OF TODAY.

*(Written for the wedding of Maribette Lowe,
September 8, 1944.)*

My Glamour Girl

My sweetheart is a glamour girl;

She sits upon my knee;

I love my sweetheart very much;

And surely she loves me.

I often gaze into her eyes,

Or hold her shapely hand;

The most impelling little miss

She is in all this land.

One day I said, "Could we be wed,

When shines the harvest moon?"

She lisped, "We might, if that seems right,

For I'll be three in June."

Two Flies

Two neighbor flies set out one day.
The first one we will just call "A";
The other shall be known as "B";
A big blue fly was he.

Now "A" buzzed round and round and round,
But ne'er alighted on the ground;
He was an active fly, you see,
Not half as big as "B".

But "B" was lazy proud and fat—
So proud he sometimes would "high hat"
His good friend "A", so meek, so true,
Just as some people do.

On this fine day "B" in a trice
Discovered honey, sweet and nice,
Within a pail, with lid removed,
A feast he much approved.

"B" thought that he should well regale
Himself on honey from that pail;
So he swooped down without delay,
And ne'er invited "A".

But honey is a sticky mess,
And our friend "B" was caught in less
Than thirty seconds. Wing and foot
Stuck fast where they were put.

"B" cried aloud: "Please, dear friend "A",
Lend me a hand to break away;
This honey is so very thick
That here I firmly stick."

But "A" was wise, though he was small,
So did not answer to the call,
But said, perched on a nearby cup,
"You've always been stuck up."

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The Rain Upon the Roof

When the days are hot and dusty,
And the ground is full o' cracks;
When the grass looks brown and rusty,
When the 'taters and the flax
Seem so wilted and so jaded,
With their heads a-hangin' down;
When the scarecrow, e'en, seems faded,
And the hazel brush turns brown;
 Then it's nice to lie at midnight,
 All so comfy in your bed,
 And to listen as the raindrops
 Pitter, patter overhead.

When the pastures all are eaten
By the 'hoppers and the cows;
And the farmers feel quite beaten,
And are getting out their plows
So's to turn down half the barley,
'Cause it's ruined by the drought;
And the oats, particularly,
Seem as though they'd petered out;
 Then it freshens all yer bein'—
 All yer warp and all yer woof—
 Jest to lie abed and listen,
 To the rain upon the roof.

When the ragweed doubles over,
As though hidin' from the heat,
And there's bare spots in the clover,
In the corn and in the wheat;
When you hear the cows a-bawlin',
Till it almost makes you sick,
For there's not a drop a-crawlin'
'Mongst the pebbles in the crick;
Then it's nice to hear the thunder,
An' to see the clouds so black,
While you listen to the patter
On the shingles o' yer shack.

When yer harvest seems a goner—
(P'raps you'll mow a bit for feed)—
And it seems as though yer honor
Must be pledged to buy yer seed;
When yer wife's old dress is tearin',
And of thread you've not a spool,
And the duds the kids are wearin'
Are not fit to wear to school;
Then it seems a bit like heaven
To look out across the plain,
And to hear the steady music
Of a "soaker" of a rain.

The Farmer

Yes, we glorify the builder,
Who erects our city blocks;
Though he has to have his timbers,
And his plaster and his rocks.
But the farmer feeds the nations—
Those who rest and those who toil—
And the farmer—What does he ask?
Just soil.

And we praise the learned doctor,
When he cures men of their ills;
But he must have penicillin
And his sulphur drugs and pills.
But the farmer stocks the storehouse
Full of meats and fruits and grain;
And the farmer—What does he need?
Just rain.

And the railroad operator:
He can move a heap of stuff;
But he has to have his box cars
And an engine big enough.
And of coal he uses mountains
Still he oft "runs in the red;"
But the farmer—What does he use?
His head.

Still the farmer is dependent,
Just as are the other men;
He needs soil and glorious sunshine,
And a "soaker" now and then.
He can sow, and he can harvest;
He can till the fertile sod;
But he has to have a partner—
That's God.

Our Tribute

Behind, before, extends the way,
Aye leading toward the west;
We each toil on for one brief day;
To bear some burden we assay;
Then down our load we gladly lay:
Relieved we stop to rest.

The prints are here of myriad feet—
The road is trodden well—
Full many a pilgrim in the heat
Has toiled, but scorned to own defeat;
And smiled the setting sun to greet
As tolled the evening bell.

We honor those who went before—
Most reverently we tread—
Betimes their toiling feet were sore;
Full oft' a heavy load they bore;
Some trudged one year; some toiled four-score,
And walked with drooping head.

The road is wound beyond the hill—
Our view of some is gone—
Their deeds we may not know until
Blows Gabriel's trumpet, strong and shrill;
Their mem'ry, though, we honor still,
As here we travel on.

GEORGE ROBERT BATHO, writer, editor, and agriculturist, spent a long and full life in service to others.

Born in Kenilworth, Wellington County, Ontario, Canada, on February 13, 1873, he was the son of Joseph and Mary Ann Hayward Batho. As a boy he learned the printing trade in Mount Forest, Ontario, and shortly thereafter was, for a time, editor and joint publisher of a local newspaper in Grand Valley, Ontario.

He went to Manitoba in 1897 where he lived and served for fifty years. After farming for a time at Austin, Manitoba, he became travelling representative and correspondent of the *Nor' West Farmer*, the pioneer agricultural journal of western Canada. In 1903 he became editor-in-chief of that paper and continued in that capacity for thirteen years. He was then appointed editor of agricultural publications for the Province of Manitoba, and later was also placed in charge of agricultural statistics for the Province.

While in the Manitoba Department of Agriculture he supervised the publication of 411 booklets, 69 of which were of his own authorship. In addition to many other duties there, he was secretary of the Manitoba Weed Commission, and through his research and educational work relating to noxious weeds he performed a service whose value to Manitoba farmers could be measured in millions of dollars. He retired in 1940 but during World War II was reengaged for several years in the Department of Agriculture.

He was chairman in 1922 of the Winnipeg Garden Show; was president and director of the Manitoba Horticultural Association, being made a life member of that

organization in recognition of his service to it. He was secretary of the Manitoba branch of the Canadian Society of Technical Agriculturists, and a life member of the Agricultural Institute of Canada.

Becoming in 1906 a charter member of the Broadway Baptist Church of Winnipeg, he served almost continuously on either its Deacons' Board or Finance Committee until 1947. He also served his church in many other capacities and was always looked to for advice and guidance in its activities. His denominational interest extended further to the broader fields of Winnipeg and western Canada and led to his active participation in the work there. He was treasurer of the Manitoba Temperance Alliance.

Respected and admired by all who knew him, a christian gentleman in every way, he was loved by a host of friends. The impress of his life, which ended January 30, 1948, will be felt for a long, long time, and will make for many, "more bright the days."

